

### Overview

The purpose of this lesson is to show the connection between American Indians in Kansas and the environment. They will learn about the traditional homes of the Wichita, Pawnee, Kansa, and Cheyenne. In reading the texts as a class, the student will practice choral reading. The material can be covered in six short sessions spread out over six days or can be combined and completed in fewer days.

### Standards

History:

Benchmark 2, Indicator 4 The student compares types of shelter used by American Indians in Kansas over time (e.g. grass lodge, tipi, earth lodge).

Geography:

Benchmark 5, Indicator 2 The student describes how the physical environment impacts humans (e.g. choices of clothing, housing, crops, recreation).

Reading:

Benchmark 2, Indicator 4 The student uses knowledge of sentence structure to read fluently at instructional or independent reading levels.

### Objectives

Content:

- The student identifies ways in which the American Indians in Kansas built homes from natural resources (grass, earth, bark, buffalo).
- The student compares the homes of the Wichita, Pawnee, Kansa, and Cheyenne.

Skills:

- The student participates in choral reading.

### Essential Questions

- In what ways were the historic tribes in Kansas different?
- How does the availability of natural resources influence our lives?



# Activities

This activity uses the following *Read Kansas* cards:

- **Meet the Wichita**
- **Meet the Pawnee**
- **Meet the Kansa**
- **Meet the Cheyenne**

## Day 1

1. Introduce the topic of people living in Kansas a long time ago and that their homes looked different but served the same purposes. They built their homes from things found in nature, such as grass, earth, bark, and buffalo hide. These are called natural resources.
2. Start with **Meet the Wichita** by reading to the class the teacher's script for establishing prior knowledge on page 4. The information the students hear will provide them with prior knowledge that will assist them in reading on their own.
3. Provide each student with a copy of **Meet the Wichita**. Read the card out loud as a class several times (choral reading). Have each student read the card to a partner.
4. Have the students fill out question "A" on the **American Indian Homes in Kansas** worksheet and then save the worksheet for the next day's lesson.

## Day 2

1. Repeat Day 1 activities using the **Meet the Pawnee** *Read Kansas* card and the teacher's script for establishing prior knowledge on page 4. Students should answer question "B" on the **American Indian Homes in Kansas** worksheet.

## Day 3

1. Repeat Day 1 activities using the **Meet the Kansa** *Read Kansas* card and the teacher's script for establishing prior knowledge on page 4. Students should answer question "C" on the **American Indian Homes in Kansas** worksheet.

## Day 4

1. Repeat Day 1 activities using the **Meet the Cheyenne** *Read Kansas* card the teacher's script for establishing prior knowledge on page 5. Students should answer question "D" on the **American Indian Homes in Kansas** worksheet.

## Day 5

1. Remind the students that people make houses from the natural resources available to them. Ask them what might they use if they were to build a house out of things in the classroom.
2. Remind the students that American Indians made their homes out of natural resources also. Play the **American Indian Homes in Kansas Memory Game**. Have the students cut out the game pieces. They will have 4 pieces that depict houses and 4 pieces that depict Kansas environments. The object of the game is to match the house with the environment from which it came. Have students turn their cards face down. Pick a card and then pick a second card trying to match the correct house to the correct environment. If the cards match, put them aside. If they do not match,

turn them face down and put them back in the game. To finish the game, students must match all four pairs. Save the game pieces.

### Day 6

1. Pass out a copy of the **Where did they live?** map worksheet to all students. Study the map as a class. Find the following:
  - Where are the tall grasses in Kansas?
  - Where is it cold in Kansas?
  - Where are the forests in Kansas?
  - Where did the buffalo roam in Kansas?
2. Have the students use the cards of the houses that they cut out for the memory game. There are four pieces. Have the students glue the right house card with the right environment picture.

## Assessment

1. Evaluate the student's ability to correctly complete the **American Indian Homes in Kansas** worksheet.
2. Observe the student's ability to match the home with the environment in the **American Indians in Kansas Memory Game**.
3. Evaluate if the student was able to place the correct home on the correct environment on the **Where did they live?** map worksheet.

## For the Teacher

Today, American Indians live in the same kinds of houses as every one else. Long ago, however, people built their homes from the materials that were available. These were the natural resources found in Kansas. Indians in Kansas used different resources including grass, earth, trees, and buffalo.

All four of these different types of homes kept families out of the wind and rain. They did a good job of keeping early Kansans warm in the winter. They all used a central fire for heat and light. The smoke from the fire escaped through the smoke hole at the top of the house. The doorways to these homes all faced east to catch the first rays of sunlight—the best source of light. Most important of all, they were homes that could be built with the tools and materials found in nature.

All four housing styles started with a wooden frame. The differences among them were the materials used to cover that frame.

## **Script For Establishing Prior Knowledge**

*What follows is the text to be read to the students before they read each of the Read Kansas cards.*

### **Meet the Wichita**

The Wichita Indians came to Kansas more than 500 years ago. They lived where the grass grew very tall and they made houses of grass.

The Wichita tribe of Kansas built homes shaped like a beehive and covered with grass. When it was time to build, the whole family would help gather the materials. They cut tall prairie grass for the exterior.

First, long poles were set in a large circle. The poles were brought together at the top making the dome. Then the poles were covered by bundles of tall grass. The bundles were tied to the frame with bark from the elm tree or rawhide.

Finally the grass lodge was finished. It was strong and did not blow over in the Kansas wind.

The Wichita lived in villages in the central part of Kansas.

### **Meet the Pawnee**

The Pawnee tribe came to Kansas more than 500 years ago. They lived in the northern prairie where it was very cold. They used earth to keep their houses warm. Their houses were called earth lodges or mud lodges.

First, the Pawnee dug a big circle about three feet down to make the floor of their home. They set heavy logs upright in a circle to make the frame for the house. Then the frame was covered with smaller poles then a layer of sod and grass. Sod is a mixture of earth and grass roots. They built a covered passageway as the door to their home. When they finished, their earth lodge would have enough space for as many as thirty people to live in it.

The Pawnees lived in villages in Kansas and Nebraska.

### **Meet the Kansa**

The Kansa moved to Kansas more than 300 years ago. Before they moved to Kansas they lived in an area that had many trees. They used tree bark to make their homes. In Kansas there were fewer trees so they could not live in houses covered with bark. They had to look for other things to cover their houses. Some used earth.

First they cleared the land and set big logs upright in a circle. From these logs they attached pole rafters for the roof. A thick layer of leaves, bark, and branches bundled together covered the frame. This was tied on with bark or rawhide strips. When finished the lodge was big enough for parents, grandparents, and children. As many as 15 people could live in one house.

The Kansa lived in villages in northeast Kansas. The state is named after the Kansa.

## Meet the Cheyenne

The Cheyenne came to Kansas more than 300 years ago. They lived on the western plains where there were many buffalo. They were hunters who moved from place to place following the buffalo herds. They used a tipi as their home. The tipi is made from buffalo hides.

The tipi was a good home for people who traveled. It could be put together and taken apart easily in hot or cold weather. To put up the tipi, long poles were tied together at one end. The bundle of poles was set up to form the frame for the tipi. Then a cover made from buffalo hides was placed around the frame. The cover was laced together using thin wooden pins. Stakes or rocks held the tipi to the ground.

The Cheyenne hunted and lived in western Kansas.

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Resources for this lesson are from:

- Kansas State Historical Society collections
- Scott Boucher (Wichita card reverse)
- Larry Hansen (Cheyenne card reverse)
- Octavian Babusi (Kansa card reverse)
- Michael Chan (Pawnee reverse)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# American Indian Homes in Kansas

## Worksheet

a. The Wichita built homes made of

\_\_\_\_\_.

b. The Pawnee built homes made of

\_\_\_\_\_.

c. The Kansa built homes made of

\_\_\_\_\_.

d. The Cheyenne built homes made of

\_\_\_\_\_.

**Word Bank:**

buffalo hides

grass

tree bark

mud

# American Indian Homes in Kansas

## Memory Game



Wichita  
Grass House



Prairie  
Where the grass is tall.



Pawnee  
Mud House



Northern Prairie  
Where it is cold.



Kansa  
Tree Bark House



Forest  
Where many trees grow.



Cheyenne  
Buffalo Hide Tipi



Plains  
Where the buffalo live.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Where did they live?

Map Worksheet

